



School Safety Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 5

December 2015

New Free 'Safety Plan Wizard' Now Available to All Illinois K-12 Schools

Digital Journal, December 2, 2015

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/2762966>

In an effort to assist school administrators with the enhancement of current safety plans or the development of new safety plans, the NaviGate Prepared® school safety emergency response system announces the launch of a free 'Safety Plan Wizard,' available to any K-12 school in Illinois.

The wizard features the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) recommended school safety plan template and allows for easy customization and implementation of plans to meet individual school needs.

"The Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) has been a sponsor of the NaviGate Prepared school safety system since 2014, helping to introduce the technology to schools throughout Illinois as an aid to improve crisis preparedness and emergency response," said Roger Eddy, Executive Director, IASB. "Illinois school administrators take the safety of our students very seriously and a free resource designed specifically to help enhance current building safety plans or devise plans if they don't exist is sure to aid with crisis training and preparation, while helping to standardize school safety plans throughout our state."

The Safety Plan Wizard (<http://safetyplan.navigateprepared.com/>) features a simple step-by-step questionnaire so administrators can easily create plans, save them as PDFs and download, print and share them with first responders and other key stakeholders. Administrators can also:

- Start, stop and save information anytime
- View helpful hints to answer questions
- Seamlessly copy information from one building safety plan to another
- Track plan development progress for each building
- Track district-wide plans year-to-year

"Our organization is committed to school safety and we don't want to see any school, in any state, lacking in the area of safety plans so we set out to develop a tool that any school could use as a guideline for improving their building safety plans -- at absolutely no cost and from a credible and reliable source [FEMA]," said Jim Hummel, President of Lauren Innovations/NaviGate Prepared. "The wizard is designed so that schools can take the information they input and customize it per their specific needs to ensure they have current, up-to-date safety plans that they can actively use."

Michele Gay, mother of 7-year-old Sandy Hook victim, Josephine, past teacher and co-founder of *Safe and Sound: A Sandy Hook Initiative* (<http://www.safeandsoundschools.org/>), travels the nation speaking to groups and organizations and offering resources and recommendations on processes, protocols, technologies and more that can make all the difference when faced with a crisis situation.

She says: "Planning and preparing for crisis may be the single most important action schools can take to protect the school community. With emergency plans in place, the school community is better prepared to recognize, prevent, mitigate, and even recover from school-based crisis."

For schools that currently use the cloud-based NaviGate Prepared system, in addition to comprehensive safety plans, administrators can also securely organize additional imperative school data and information -- and allow first responders 24/7 'eyes on' access to it to improve crisis training and aid with emergency response.

*Protecting our
future through
information
sharing*

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New Free ‘Safety Plan Wizard’ Now Available to All Illinois K-12 Schools (continue)

The system offers real-time access to emergency call lists, safety plans, virtual binders, building maps and floor plans, 360-degree images, live video feeds, drill logs and more. Staff can also access the award-winning NaviGate Flipcharts (<http://navigateprepared.com/Flipcharts.aspx>) mobile app, which allows instant access, with or without Internet connection, to emergency and crisis flipcharts.

NaviGate Prepared is SAFETY Act Designated as an anti-terrorism-level technology by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It has been implemented in hundreds of school districts throughout the nation, including several in Illinois, such as Grayslake Community High School District 127 (Lake County ROE), Fisher Community Unit School District 1 (Champaign-Ford County ROE 9), Cuba Community Unit School District 3 (Fulton County ROE 22), Robinson Community Unit School District 2 (ROE 12), Quincy Public School District 172 (ROE 1) and more.

To obtain the Safety Plan Wizard, administrators can visit: safetyplan.navigateprepared.com. More information on NaviGate Prepared can be found at: www.navigateprepared.com.

Spring Valley SRO Incident Prompts Broader Look at Officers’ Role in Schools

Herald Online, November 1, 2015

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/state/south-carolina/article42135969.html>

After cameras captured a Richland County sheriff’s deputy forcefully removing a Spring Valley High School student from her desk to the floor, local and national opinions erupted over not just what happened in that math class, but what happens – and what should happen – in the more than 84,000 schools around the nation that have a security presence on campus.

Numerous people in education, law enforcement and beyond have spoken out, saying the clear function of school resource officers is not to intervene in routine discipline matters in schools, such as in the Spring Valley incident, which reportedly stemmed from the student’s refusal to surrender her cellphone and leave the classroom.

More broadly, though, what happened at Spring Valley has presented an urgent opportunity to evaluate the role of officers in schools. Important questions include where and how to draw the line between disciplinary and criminal matters, how to delineate specific duties and procedures for specific players in schools, and how to address the deep issues that cause students to act out.

“Something went wrong (at Spring Valley),” South Carolina education superintendent Molly Spearman said. “We need to get to the root cause of it and make sure that everyone learns from this, not just at Spring Valley, but all across the state.”

Resource officers’ No. 1 role is to ensure the safety of students, Spearman said. She, along with Richland 2 Superintendent Debbie Hamm, Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott and other local and statewide leaders say they believe resource officers continue to have an important and appropriate function inside schools.

“The instance of violent crime and guns and those things in our schools, they’re relatively rare, but when they happen you want the right person there to deal with them,” Hamm said.

Blurred lines and mission creep

But “there is a mission creep problem where that safety role can morph into getting involved in routine discipline,” said Josh Gupta-Kagan, an assistant professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law. “They shouldn’t be called in when someone won’t put their cellphone away,” said Gupta-Kagan, who teaches juvenile justice and child welfare law. “... I very strongly suspect there are many other issues in which school resource officers are called in to handle routine discipline issues.”

Officers should learn to say no if asked to intervene inappropriately, Gupta-Kagan said. “School resource officers should be trained to decline invitations to intervene when situations don’t involve serious threats or more serious crimes,” he said. And, he said, teachers and administrators should be discouraged from calling on resource officers for most issues, he said. Teachers and administrators “have a wide range of school consequences they can impose on a disobedient student,” he said.

A contract between the Richland County Sheriff’s department and Richland 2 outlines three broad duties of resource officers: to perform law enforcement duties such as handling assaults, thefts, threats, drug incidents and other crimes; to serve as a source of counseling for students on law-related issues; and to teach law-related topics to students. The contract specifically states that an officer “shall not act as a school disciplinarian, as disciplining students is a school responsibility.”

Monthly Webinars!

Normally first Wednesday of Every Month at 10 am.

Next Webinar

Wednesday February 3, 2015

Each webinar has a round table discussion at the end. Questions are always welcome!

To participate, you must be a vetted member. For more information please email schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us

Spring Valley SRO Incident Prompts Broader Look at Officers' Role in Schools (continue)

But officers' role in such issues is muddied by a South Carolina law that essentially criminalizes discipline issues in schools. "The fact of the matter is there is this continuum," Hamm said. "It's not clear what is one or the other (discipline or criminal matters) when you get to the edges of those things. And then when you have such a broad law, there is an even greater gray area." The state's statute for "disturbing schools" makes it a misdemeanor criminal offense to "interfere with or to disturb in any way or in any place the students or teachers of any school or college."

The two students involved in the Spring Valley incident – the young woman who was pulled from her desk and another female student, Niya Kenny, who was arrested after shouting at the deputy and school employees to stop – have been charged with disturbing schools. "When you've got nonviolent disobedience, you've got a teenager acting obnoxiously – yes, that violates the law," Gupta-Kagan said. "But I don't think it's good law enforcement policy, and I don't think it's good education policy (to involve the officer)."

Disturbing schools is the third most frequent referral offense that lands children in the South Carolina's juvenile justice system, according to state Department of Juvenile Justice statistics from 2013-14. Nearly 1,200 disturbing schools cases were generated statewide during that period, including 98 cases from Richland County. Lott calls the state's disturbing schools statute "the worst law ever passed."

Now, evaluate training and resources

Both Lott and Hamm said they soon will be convening their major players, including resource officers, administrators and other educators, to review and refresh the policies and procedures already in place regarding student discipline and evaluate what changes can be made in light of what happened at Spring Valley. The process of evaluating discipline procedures began in Richland 2 over a year ago, in fact, with a task force dedicated to the issue, Hamm said.

At the state level, Spearman said she plans to assemble a task force of educators, law enforcement officials and parents to discuss the best practices of student discipline codes, policies and procedures and consider handing down guidelines to individual school districts. "Why do you intervene? How far do you need to go? How do you not escalate a situation?" are all issues to be discussed and delineated, Spearman said. "I think we all could use a refresher course in that."

Richland County's school resource officers are trained through the state criminal justice academy, and many are given the option to attend additional professional development training along with school educators. That training should include "at least some concepts related to understanding the teen brain and adolescent emotional issues, all those things you're dealing with in the school environment," said Mo Canady, executive director of the National Association of School Resource Officers, which offers a variety of training courses around the nation. The Alabama-based association has offered to conduct a complimentary statewide training course in South Carolina in the wake of the Spring Valley incident, Canady said.

In addition to officer training, schools and school districts should be taking this moment to consider the availability of "wraparound services" for students facing discipline issues, said Bernadette Hampton, president of the South Carolina Education Association, a union representing public school teachers in the state. Those services include, beyond resource officers, access to and relationships with guidance counselors, nurses, mental health professionals, teachers and administrators, said Hampton, who has been a math teacher for more than two decades at Battery Creek High School in Beaufort.

"When a student acts out or misbehaves, there's a reason," Hampton said. "If we have the proper resources (and training) to address those factors that cause those certain behaviors ... then that will minimize and not escalate certain situations."

Resources to Assist School Districts to Create Memoranda of Understanding with Law Enforcement Officers in Schools

Public Act 099-0456 SB0100 (<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0456>) will be in effect September 15, 2016. Part of the act, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(b) added "School districts are encouraged to create memoranda of understanding with local law enforcement agencies that clearly define law enforcement's role in schools...". Listed below are a few resources that could help.

- Principals & SROs: Defining Roles <http://www.principals.org/portals/0/content/48146.pdf>
- Improving Memoranda of Understanding for School Resource Officer Services By Kimberly Small, Assistant General Counsel, Illinois Association of School Boards, June 2014 <https://www.iasb.com/law/NSBAImprovingMOUForSRO2014.pdf>
- Memorandum of Understanding Fact Sheet, COPS, May 2015 http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/2015AwardDocs/chp/CHP_MOU_Fact_Sheet.pdf
- SROs, Safe Schools, and the Interagency Agreement, by Bernard James, Professor of Constitutional Law, Pepperdine University, Reprinted from the Spring 2012 edition of the NASRO Journal of School Safety. <https://nasro.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/SROs-Safe-Schools-and-the-Interagency-Agreement.pdf>



San Bernardino Shooting Update: Farook Inspected School Cafeterias Before Massacre

<http://www.scpr.org/news/2015/12/07/56085/shooter-inspected-san-bernardino-school-cafeterias/>

89.3 KPCC Southern California Public Radio

San Bernardino school officials tell KPCC that Syed Rizwan Farook visited eleven school sites to inspect cafeterias through his job as a San Bernardino County health inspector.

Officials found out less than a day after the shootings that Farook had been at a high school campus two months before the shootings that left 14 people dead and 21 wounded.

Linda Bardere, a spokeswoman for the San Bernardino City Unified School District said the school district didn't want to take any chances, so officials asked the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for help because school police were busy at the shooting site.

"San Manuel did allow their bomb sniffing canine unit to come out to Arroyo Valley High School and clear the kitchen and also clear the pool areas where Mr. Farook had visited just a month or two before," Bardere said.

After nothing suspicious was found officials pulled records for other school cafeteria inspections carried out by Farook and found that he had visited ten other the campuses to inspect cafeterias.

"Because this was such an unexpected attack at the Inland Regional Center, we didn't want to take any chances, we just wanted to make sure that our school sites were safe and they indeed are," Bardere said.

After the deadly shooting San Bernardino school officials put all school buildings on lockdown. Bardere said Dominguez Elementary School found itself on lockdown longest because there was shooting between police and the shooters nearby.

The School and Campus Safety Program– Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board Executive Institute

The School and Campus Safety Program continues to build on past efforts of providing support to schools, campuses and communities. The program is now managed by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board Executive Institute and administered through Western Illinois University. The Program Manager, Bob Elliott, encourages you to contact him on any training requests, program recommendations or other questions. RL-Elliott@wiu.edu or (309) 298-2646

Homeland security encompasses many aspects of our society. The safety of students, faculty, and staff remain among our highest homeland security priorities. We know schools are often the safest places for children and employees. However, we must continue efforts to make them even safer. The importance of this mandate is reflected in the commitment of the ILETSB Executive Institute.

In respect to school and campus safety, the Executive Institute has a long history of collaborating with first responder agencies, institutions of higher education, K-12 schools, and other partner agencies. The results include enhanced knowledge, skills, and abilities of faculty, staff, and responders through training, education, workshops, and seminars.

The Illinois School and Campus Safety Program mission is to provide a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach to identification of training needs, curriculum development, course delivery, and technical assistance through the use of evidence-based resources and research for safe, secure, and healthy schools and campuses.

Specific actions underway include a statewide needs assessment, analysis of participant evaluations from previous training classes, development of online learning modules and webinars, and planning for classroom training offerings as well as regional workshops.

School Safety

Newsletter

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